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ABSTRACT

The reliability of the questionnaire, Students' Views of an Ideal Professor, was studied. Subjects were 86 students (35 males and 51 females) who were enrolled in psychology classes at a state university. Subjects included 34 freshmen, 27 sophomores, 20 juniors, 4 seniors, and 1 graduate. The questionnaire consists of 25 characteristics of a quality professor. Subjects responded to the questionnaire twice within 12 days using a 5-point Likert scale of 5 as the most important, and 1 as the least important. The two responses to the questionnaire for each criterion were analyzed using the Pearson-product moment correlation and Cronbach's alpha (internal consistency). The correlations were all statistically significant. The five most important and the five least important criteria of an ideal professor were compared with findings reported in previous studies. The similar results show that the questionnaire is a statistically reliable instrument. Three tables present study data, and there is a 13-item list of references. (SLD)

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ANALYSIS OF AN INSTRUMENT ON A QUALITY PROFESSOR

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ANALYSIS OF AN INSTRUMENT ON A QUALITY PROFESSOR

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, Students' Views of An Ideal Professor (Gadzella, 1966). Subjects were 86 students who were enrolled in psychology classes at a state university. The questionnaire consists of 25 characteristics of a quality professor. Subjects responded to the questionnaire twice within 12 days using the 5-point Likert scale of 5 = most important, 4 = important, 3 = average importance, 2 = below average importance, and 1 = least important. The responses to the questionnaire were analyzed using the Pearson-product moment correlation and the Cronbach's alpha (internal consistency). The correlations were all statistically significant ($p < .05$). The five most important and the five least important criteria of an ideal professor were compared with findings reported in previous studies. The results were similar. The results of the present study show that the questionnaire, Students' Views of An Ideal Professor, is a statistically reliable instrument.

INTRODUCTION

For years, researchers have attempted to identify the characteristics that students view as descriptive of an ideal professor. Profiles of teachers (McComas, 1965; Shane, 1965) and questionnaires on the characteristics of a quality professor

(Quick & Wolfe, 1965; Vaughn, 1966; Stewart & Malpass, 1966; Elmore & Pohlmann, 1978) have been published. Other researchers (Marsh, 1984; Marsh, Fleiner & Thomas, 1975; Rayder, 1968) sought students impressions of professors with the hope that they could establish effective communication with students and provide objective evaluations on professors' performances.

A questionnaire (Gadzella, 1966), using students' views of an ideal professor, was developed and has been administered to a number of students (Gadzella, 1967, 1968a, 1968b). In spite of the similar student responses obtained from various institutions of higher learning, the reliability of the instrument was not analyzed.

The purpose of the present study was to determine the reliability of the Students' Views of An Ideal Professor (Gadzella, 1966) using different methods of analysis. In addition, the findings of the present study were compared with those reported in previous studies.

METHOD

There were 86 students, enrolled in psychology classes at a state university, who participated in the study. In this group, there were 35 men and 51 women. The subjects identified themselves as freshmen (n = 34), sophomores (n = 27), juniors (n = 20), seniors (n = 4), and graduate (n = 1). They reported their grade-point averages (GPA) which were grouped as follows: 2.00 - 2.50 (n = 17), 2.51 - 3.00 (n = 27), 3.01 = 3.50 (n = 29), and 3.51 - 4.00 (n = 8).

These subjects responded to the Students' Views of An Ideal Professor (Gadzella, 1966) twice within 12 days. The questionnaire consists of 25 characteristics of an ideal professor. Subjects were asked to rate each characteristic on a 5-point Likert scale where 5 = most important, 4 = important, 3 = average importance, 2 = below average importance, and 1 = least important. In addition, subjects were asked to select five most important criteria and rank them in order of importance from the most important to the fifth most important. Then, they were asked to select the five least important and rank those criteria from the least important to the fifth least important.

Data from the two responses to the questionnaire were analyzed using the Pearson-product moment correlation for each criterion for the total group and for total scores for the total, gender, college status, and GPA groups. Cronbach's alpha was computed for the total scores on the subjects first response to the questionnaire. The five most and five least important criteria were compared to findings previously reported.

RESULTS

The coefficients of correlation for the two responses to the questionnaire are reported in Table 1. The data in Table 1 indicate that all criteria were statistically significant ($p < .05$) ranging from .30 to .72. In addition, the total scores on the two responses were correlated for various groups. The results, summarized in Table 2, were for: the total group, $r = .74$; gender (men, $r = .57$; women, $r = .80$); college status

(freshman, r = .74; sophmores, r = .80; juniors, r = .65; seniors, r = .99). There was only one graduate in this group. The correlations for the GPA groups were as follows: 2.00 -2.50, r = .42; 2.51 - 3.00, r = .81; 3.01 - 3.50, r = .87; and 3.51 - 4.00, r = .81. The Cronbach alpha (internal consistency) for the total group on the first response to the questionnaire was .84.

The five most important and five least important characteristics of an ideal professor are compared with three other campuses in Table 3. The data in Table 3 indicate that five most important and five least criteria of an ideal professor are similar for the four campuses over the period of 26 years.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Data in Tables 1 and 2 and Cronbach's alpha all indicate that the questionnaire, Students' Views of An Ideal Professor, is a reliable instrument. The results from the selection of the five most and five least important characteristics by students in four campuses show a great deal of similarity and consistency. Students in the four campuses selected the three most important criteria of an ideal professor in the following order: (1) knowledge of subject matter, (2) interest in subject matter, and (3) presents material in a flexible manner. In addition, students selected criteria indicating an ideal professor is informal and establishes rapport and uses clear, comprehensive vocabulary.

There seems to be a great deal of agreement on the least

important criteria of an ideal professor over the four campuses. Students feel that a professor who writes books/articles, participates in community life, and participates in research are activities of least important to them. The most important criteria of an ideal professor reflect the descriptions of how professors might affect students' learning. That is, what professors can do to make learning (for students) more enjoyable and effective. From the results of these studies over the years, students describe the ideal professor with a high degree of consistency.

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TABLE 1

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN TWO RESPONSES OF STUDENTS' VIEWS OF AN IDEAL PROFESSOR (N = 86)

Criterion Number	Criterion	r
1.	Has knowledge of subject matter	.61*
2.	Has interest in subject matter	.65*
3.	Interrelates other subject areas	.42*
4.	Presents topics from different points of view	.56*
5.	Participates in research	.70*
6.	Writes books/articles	.46*
7.	Participates in community life	.41*
8.	Presents material in flexible manner	.37*
9.	Encourages students' participation	.47*
10.	Has sense of humor	.46*
11.	Uses clear, comphrensive vocabulary	.30*
12.	Speakes with good enunciation	.41*
13.	Is informal, establishes rapport	.65*
14.	Respects students' views	.49*
15.	Is interested in teaching students	.45*
16.	Is punctual for classes	.47*
17.	Is well-groomed (appearance)	.53*
18.	Is prepared for daily and course presentations	.50*
19.	Provides supplementary references	.54*
20.	Provides "meaty" sufficient material	.42*
21.	Uses realistic/appropriate teaching methods	.54*
22.	Gives assignments based on lessons covered	.54*
23.	Has standards and impartiality in grading	.38*
24.	Is prompt in returning tests	.72*
25.	Has office hours/is available for student conferences	.52*

$P > .05$

TABLE 2

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN TWO RESPONSES OF THE IDEAL PROFESSOR QUESTIONNAIRE ON TOTAL SCORES FOR THE TOTAL, GENDER, COLLEGE STATUS, AND GRADE-POINT AVERAGE GROUPS

Groups	Number	r
Total	86	.74*
Gender		
Men	35	.57*
Women	51	.80*
College Status		
Freshmen	34	.74*
Sophomore	27	.80*
Junior	20	.65*
Senior	4	.99*
Graduate	1	NS
Grade-Point Averages		
2.00 - 2.50	17	.42*
2.51 - 3.00	27	.81*
3.01 - 3.50	29	.87*
3.51 - 4.00	8	.81*

$p < .05$

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' FIVE MOST IMPORTANT AND FIVE LEAST IMPORTANT CRITERIA OF AN IDEAL PROFESSOR FROM FOUR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

Institution of higher Learning	Sample Size	Criteria									
		Most Important					Least Important				
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
East Texas State University Commerce, Texas (1991)	86	1	2	8	13	14	6	7	17	5	19
Western Washington State College, Bellingham, Wash. (1968a)	443	1	2	8	18	11	6	7	5	17	16
Wisconsin State University, Oskhosh, Wisconsin (1967)	678	1	2	8	11	18	6	7	17	16	5
State University College of New York, New Paltz, N.Y. (1968b)	1145	1	2	8	13	14	17	6	7	16	24